

Message Text

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ORIGIN DHA-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 DPW-01 CIAE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 SCS-03 /086 R

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P R 280012Z SEP 76

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TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 240289

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CASC, VS

SUBJECT: AMERICANS IN VIETNAM: GAY AND GOUGELMANN

REFS: A) BANGKOK 26635; B) BANGKOK 26484; C) BANGKOK 26332;
D) USDAO BANGKOK MESSAGE TO JCRC 230319Z SEP 75; E) STATE
237068

1. REF A-D REPORTS MUCH APPRECIATED. WE ARE GLAD TO HAVE
REPORTING ON ARLO GAY'S EXPERIENCE, AND ARE DISTRESSED BY
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REF. A REPORT (BEING REPEATED TO CANBERRA) THAT TUCKER

GOUGELMANN MAY HAVE DIED IN CHI HOA PRISON IN MID-AUGUST.

2. DESPITE THIS REPORT, WE BELIEVE EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF GOUGELMANN SUGGESTED REF. E SHOULD GO FORWARD.

3. REGARDING GAY, WE ARE ESPECIALLY INTERESTED IN HIS ESCAPE WHILE IN NORTH VIETNAM AND WOULD APPRECIATE ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON HOW HE MANAGED TO ELUDE RECAPTURE, ESPECIALLY SINCE HE DOES NOT APPEAR FROM HIS PHOTOGRAPHS TO LOOK AT ALL VIETNAMESE.

4. WE NOTE THAT EARLIER AUSTRALIAN REPORT REFERRED TO A PHOTOGRAPH BEING CIRCULATED IN HANOI IN JULY, 1976 OF A MAN WITH A BEARD. SUGGEST YOU ASK GAY IF HE HAD A BEARD WHILE IN CAPTIVITY AND WHETHER HE RECALLS BEING PHOTOGRAPHED

5. YOU COULD ALSO POINT OUT TO GAY THAT IT APPEARS HIS STAY AT SON TAY OVERLAPPED WITH DETENTION THERE OF THE 14 U.S. AND THIRD COUNTRY PRISONERS CAPTURED AT BAN ME THUOT IN MARCH 1975, WHO WERE RELEASED IN HANOI ON OCTOBER 30, 1975. AT THE TIME OF THEIR RELEASE, THAT GROUP SAID THEY HAD SEEN AN EXTRA SET OF CLOTHES TO FIT A SLENDER MAN OF MEDIUM HEIGHT, APPARENTLY PREPARED FOR AN ADDITIONAL PRISONER. ON OCTOBER 13, 1975 THEY SAW A VIETNAMESE INTERROGATOR AT SON TAY WHOSE INTEREST WAS ROOTING OUT PRO-US INFRASTRUCTURE IN SVN, BUT WHO DID NOT QUESTION ANY OF THEM. WHEN A PHOTOGRAPHER CAME TO TAKE THEIR PICTURES, THEY OVERHEARD HIM BEING TOLD THERE WERE "15" PERSONS TO BE PHOTOGRAPHED. WE WOULD BE INTERESTED TO KNOW IF GAY WAS AWARE OF THE OTHER AMERICANS AT SON TAY WHILE HE WAS THERE, OR OF THEIR RELEASE ON OCTOBER 30.

6. IF GAY PLANS TRAVEL TO U.S. IN NEAR FUTURE, DEPTOFFS AND STAFF OF SELECT COMMITTEE, WOULD BE GLAD TO TALK TO HIM INFORMALLY AT HIS CONVENIENCE. IF HE IS AGREEABLE TO THIS, WE WOULD APPRECIATE BEING ADVISED OF HIS TRAVEL PLANS. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CITIZEN PROTECTION, REPATRIATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE240289
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: FASIEVERTS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760365-0207
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760911/aaaaajoh.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN DHA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 BANGKOK 26635, 76 BANGKOK 26484, 76 BANGKOK 26332
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: BoyleJA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 APR 2004 by CollinP0>; APPROVED <13 AUG 2004 by BoyleJA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMERICANS IN VIETNAM: GAY AND GOUGELMANN
TAGS: PFOR, CASC, VS, US, (GAY, ARLO), (GOUGELMANN, TUCKER)
To: BANGKOK
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006